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‘Self-rule for Gaza’ tops Istanbul moot agenda today

• Summit of Muslim bloc foreign ministers will ‘come down hard on Israel’ over ceasefire violations

• Pakistan to demand complete Israeli withdrawal, unfettered provision of aid to Palestinians

Dawn Report

ISLAMABAD: Turkiye is expected to push for ensuring the security and administration of Gaza by Palestinians, as Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar joins his counterparts from the eight-nation Muslim bloc, suing for peace in the besieged Palestinian territory, for a summit in Istanbul today (Monday).

The Coordination Meeting of Arab-Islamic Foreign Ministers is expected to take up the Gaza ceasefire deal, piloted by US President Donald Trump.

Confused messaging: Editorial on Page 6

Israel continues to violate ceasefires with deadly attacks on two fronts: Page 12

However, the truce, which left thorny issues like the disarmament of Hamas and a timeline for Israeli withdrawal from Gaza unresolved, has been tested by unilateral Israeli bombardment since coming into force.

The Istanbul meeting is expected to bring together the foreign ministers of Turkiye, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Qatar, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan — the same countries that met with US President Donald Trump on Sept. 23, on the margins of the UN General Assembly.

At the foreign ministers’ meeting, Turkiye’s Hakan Fidan is expected to “emphasise the importance of coordinated action by Muslim countries for the ceasefire to evolve into a lasting peace,” *Reuters* quoted a Turkish foreign ministry source as saying on Sunday.

The source said Mr Fidan is set to tell the meeting that Israel is “making excuses” to end the ceasefire and emphasise the need for the international community to “take a resolute stance against Israel’s provocative actions”.

He was also set to say that humanitarian aid entering Gaza is insufficient and Israel has not fulfilled its obligations in this regard.

According to *TRT World*, Mr Fidan is anticipated to stress the need to swiftly implement arrangements that would allow Palestinians to assume responsibility for Gaza’s security and administration, while safeguarding their legitimate rights and upholding the vision of a two-state solution.

He will also highlight the importance of maintaining consultations and close coordination on steps to be taken within UN platforms, the sources added.

Relations between Turkiye and Israel have hit new lows during the Gaza war, with President Tayyip Erdogan harshly criticising

Continued on Page 11

GAZA CITY: Palestinian children attend a class in the historic Al-Kamaliya Al-Othmanya school in the Old Town as part of a volunteer initiative organised by displaced teachers. Children began returning to classrooms in the devastated Palestinian territory last week after the UN announced the reopening of some schools. According to UNRWA, more than 25,000 schoolchildren have already joined temporary learning spaces set up by the agency.—AFP

Ex-PTI leaders double down on bid to revive party’s fortunes

• Fawad claims over a dozen lawmakers agree with him on need to ‘open channel with govt’; concedes he ‘doesn’t represent PTI’ • Qaiser says party ‘willing to talk to anyone’ if fair polls assured • Ismail says no ‘minus-Imran formula’

By Mansoor Malik and Ikram Junaidi

LAHORE/ISLAMABAD: Even as its founder remains locked up, and the party continues to lose ground, some former PTI members seem to have taken it upon themselves to end the isolation faced by their erstwhile party, proposing talks with the government and other parties to bring down political temperatures and pave the way for Imran Khan’s release.

Only a day ago, a number of ex-PTI leaders, including former information minister Fawad Chaudhry and ex-Sindh governor Imran Ismail, had called on party vice chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi at a Lahore hospital, ostensibly to seek his blessing for their campaign — an offer Mr Qureshi did not endorse, as per his lawyer.

On Sunday, Mr Chaudhry doubled down on his quest to revive the fortunes of the PTI, even as senior party leaders like Asad Qaiser maintained that both the party and its founder “will not compromise on their principles” even if they engage in a dialogue.

Speaking to *Dawn*, Fawad Chaudhry acknowledged that he and his colleagues did not have a

Continued on Page 5

Punjab govt extends ban on gatherings till 8th

Dawn Report

LAHORE: Punjab’s Home Department has extended Section 144 across the province until November 8, banning protests, rallies, sit-ins, and public gatherings due to concerns over terrorism and public order, *Dawn.com* reported.

Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code is a legal provision that empowers district administrations to prohibit an assembly of four or more people in an area for a limited period.

“In view of security threats, public processions and sit-ins can be soft targets for terrorists,” the home department said in its statement issued on Sunday. “Malignant elements can take advantage of public protests and carry out anti-state activities to fulfil their nefarious intentions.”

It added that a complete ban has been imposed on the display of all types of weapons across Punjab. “There is also a complete ban on the use of loudspeakers under Section 144,” it said.

Furthermore, as per the statement, there is a complete ban on the publication and distribution of inflammatory, hateful or sectarian material. The department detailed that the decision to extend the implementation of Section 144 was taken to maintain law and order as well as to

Continued on Page 5

Three cops hurt in Hangu blast; ‘Afghan IED expert’ killed in Tank

Dawn Report

PESHAWAR: Three police officers, including an SHO, were wounded on Sunday when an improvised explosive device struck a police convoy conducting search operations near a cemetery in the Doaba area of Hangu, police said.

According to a police official, Saqib, a team was conducting a search operation in Paracha gravyard near the Karbogha area when the remote-controlled explosion occurred, leaving SHO Imranuddin, Head Constable Jihad Ali and Abid Ali injured.

All three were later provided treatment Hangu’s district headquarters hospital.

The attack followed a threat alert issued on Friday by the federal interior ministry in Islamabad. The alert had cautioned that a motorcycle laden with explosives might be used to strike a police checkpoint or security officials between the Hangu and Orakzai districts.

The alert had urged concerned authorities to

Continued on Page 5

ON OTHER PAGES

India win Women’s World Cup

India win their maiden Women’s World Cup title with a 52-run victory over South Africa at the DY Patil Stadium in Mumbai on Sunday. With this win, India joined Australia, England and New Zealand as the only countries to have won the showpiece tournament. **Page 18**

Plus...

BUSINESS & FINANCE

WB asks Pakistan to overhaul skewed trade pacts

• Urges govt to ensure market-determined, flexible exchange rate • Calls for deeper reforms to cut energy, input costs

By Khaleeq Kiani

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank has asked Pakistan to improve its skewed preferential trade agreements with 10 bilateral partners, ensure a market-determined and flexible exchange rate and push deeper reforms to lower energy and other input costs to turbocharge over three decades of declining exports for sustainable economic growth.

In a policy advice to the government, the bank observed that nearly all countries that have achieved rapid and durable growth have done so by tapping into global markets, but Pakistan has struggled to follow this path.

“Exports have declined from 16 per cent of GDP in the 1990s to just around 10pc in 2024, with the export basket still concentrated in low-value textile and agricultural products,” it said, adding that economic upturns had been fuelled instead by debt and remittance-financed consumption, rather than export dynamism.

The Washington-based lending agency has asked Pakistan to maintain a flexible exchange rate to ensure export competitiveness and complement tariff reform.

“Allow the emergence of a deep and liquid interbank market without SBP [State Bank of Pakistan] intermediation and encourage greater participation from a diverse range of market players, including exporters, importers and foreign investors,” it said.

It also demanded the publication of detailed data on interbank market transactions, including volumes and participants and phase out ad hoc interventions by the central bank, allowing the exchange rate to reflect genuine supply and demand.

It noted that as growth accelerates and is fuelled by higher imports, foreign exchange reserves are strained, particularly when the exchange rate is tightly managed, triggering recurrent balance-of-payment crises. This cycle of boom and bust has undermined investor confidence, constrained private investment and eroded the foundations of long-term sustainable growth.

Underlying this weak export performance are deep-seated productivity and competitiveness challenges, it said. Distortionary policies, such as high tariff barriers, increased input costs and consumer prices, driving up production costs and encouraging firms to focus on protected local markets.

Simultaneously, excessive and redundant red tape and regulation, and a heavy state presence in the economy (including more than 200 state-owned enterprises at the federal level) have undermined efficiency, deterred investment, and distorted resource allocation, as exporters face major constraints on access to finance.

On top of that, the costs of customs management and logistics are high, and government-supported measures to assist firms in accessing foreign export markets have often been insufficient, including in negotiating trade deals, establishing a system to support

Continued on Page 5

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